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ANNUAL REPORT OF THE
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
for the year
1 9 5 5.

Medical Officer of Health -

NOEL F. PEARSON, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.

Sanitary Inspector -

W. N. TEASDALE, M.R.S.I., M.S.I.A.

Council Offices,
STURMINSTER NEWTON,
Dorset.

1st June 1956.

To the Mayor, Aldermen & Councillors,
Shaftesbury Borough Council.

Madam & Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit my Annual Report for the year 1955.

The report is prepared and will be circulated in accordance with the requirements of the Sanitary Officers (Outside London) Regulations 1935 & 1951.

The report shows that the health of the Borough has remained satisfactory and that there has been no undue incidence of serious infectious disease during the year.

I am indebted to Mr. Teasdale, your Sanitary Inspector, for his co-operation and help during the year, and for his assistance in preparing this report, and to my clerk, Miss.P.Goddard, for her efficient services.


I would also like to thank you, Madam and Gentlemen, for your courtesy and consideration throughout the year.

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient Servant

Arthur P. Goddard

Medical Officer of Health.



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SHAFTESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
FOR THE YEAR

1 9 5 5.

A. Area - 1,078 acres.

Rateable value - 1955 - £21,893; 1956 - £41,021.

Production of a penny rate - 1955/56 - £86.12s.3d; 1956/57 - £164.

Vital Statistics.

Population (Registrar General's Estimate) - 3,450

LIVE BIRTHS.

	<u>Male.</u>	<u>Femals.</u>		<u>Comparative figures</u>	
				(a)Shaftesbury Borough	(b) England & Wales.
Total	36	24)Rate per 1,000 resident pop: = 17.4		
Legitimate	35	24			
Illegitimate	1	Nil		18.2	15.0

STILLBIRTHS.

Total	-	1	Rate per 1,000 live & stillbirths = 16.4	16.6	23.1
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DEATHS.

Total	18	24	Rate per 1,000 resident pop: = 12.2	8.7	11.7
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Deaths in infants under one year	-	1	Infantile death rate per 1,000 live births = 16.6	16.6	24.5
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			<u>1955.</u>	<u>1954.</u>	<u>1953.</u>
Deaths from Maternal Causes	-		Nil	Nil	Nil
" " Tuberculosis	-		1	Nil	Nil
" " Cancer of the Lungs	-		1	2	Nil
" " Coronary Disease (Angina)	-		8	4	8
" " Influenza	-		Nil	Nil	Nil
" " Pneumonia	-		7	3	1
" " Motor vehicle accidents	-		Nil	Nil	Nil
" " All other accidents	-		1	Nil	Nil
" " Suicide	-		Nil	Nil	Nil

B. Nature of the District.

Shaftesbury is an ancient Borough with strong historical connections. It is a market town supplying the requirements of the farming community in the surrounding districts. Its principal industries and trades include glove making and the central depot for the Southern Electricity Board and Post Office Engineers is stationed there. A Government Radio Station is also within its boundaries.

C. Personal Health Services in the District.

The personal health services continued to be provided by the County Council and have proved satisfactory and no further comment is considered necessary in connection with them.

The ambulance services are provided by the County Council using the St. John Ambulance Brigade as their agent. An efficient service has been maintained during the year.

The hospital services are provided by the Salisbury and West Dorset Hospital Management Committee.

D. Environmental Health Services.

1. SANITARY STAFF.

Borough Surveyor, Sanitary Inspector and Water Engineer -
William Normal Teasdale, M.R.S.I., M.S.I.A., (Part time
on sanitary duties).

Certificate of R.S.I. & S.I.E.J.B.

Certificate of R.S.I. as Inspector of Meat and Other Foods.

Clerical Staff - one whole-time Shorthand Typist/Clerk.

In an attempt to enable the Sanitary Inspector to give more time to his sanitary duties and less to his work as Borough Surveyor, in the early part of the year the Council appointed an Assistant in the Department of the Borough Surveyor. The essential new works prepared for or undertaken by the Council during the year has fully occupied this Assistant's time and as much of Mr. Teasdale's time as formerly. So far, therefore, the appointment of the Assistant has not yet given Mr. Teasdale the relief hoped for and routine sanitary work has still to take second place in his activities. This is unfortunate when slum clearance is now being called for and when the newly issued Food Hygiene Regulations make further heavy demands on his time. As Mr. Teasdale states in respect of slum clearance and food hygiene - "Every endeavour will be made, of course, to keep abreast of these matters as they arise, but due allowance must be made and the delays which are bound to arise should be regarded with considerable toleration".

2. WATER SUPPLY.

(a) Quantity. The low level of the Barton Hill Wells at the end of 1954 was considerably improved during the course of the year and, even though the summer was dry, more than sufficient water was available for the town. The auxiliary supply from Salisbury Road had to be brought into use on several occasions not connected with the quantity of water available in the wells. In April the feeder main to and from the Reservoir had to be cut and diverted around the dwellings at Barton Close, thus requiring the alternative supply for several days. In July

the disastrous thatch fire in St. James Street required more water than the mains in that area would supply and in November the feeder mains were again cut to connect the new 6" Christys Lane main to bring water from Stubhampton. A blockage in this main occurred and the auxiliary supply had to be brought into use again.

The total yield from the Barton Hill Wells during 1955 was 44,692,000 gallons, an increase of 3,648,000 upon the figures for 1954 bringing the yield more or less back to the same level as 1953. In addition, 1,515,000 gallons were pumped from Salisbury Road giving an increased total consumption for the year of 2,388,000 gallons or, 6,500 gallons per day, due to a slight increase of new and improved dwellings and the increased agricultural demand during the dry summer.

(b) Quality. Of 15 bacteriological samples taken during the year, four were from the Barton Hill Wells, seven from various taps on the public mains supply, one from a private ram supply and three from the open air swimming bath. All proved very satisfactory except for the ram supply which was classified as suspicious. Representations as to the quality of the water were made to the owner and work was put in hand to disconnect this supply and afford a supply from the public mains. This work has now been completed.

(c) New Connections and Extensions. Considerable work has been done in the preparation of plans and contracts for replacement of defective mains and extension of existing supplies for new development.

The diversion of the shallow feeder mains under the Old People's Dwellings at Barton Hill mentioned in the 1954 Report, was satisfactorily carried out in April.

The proposals for the new 6" delivery main in Christys Lane in preparation of the new supply from Stubhampton was carried out late in the year and completed in December. Chlorination and bacteriological tests on this main are still being carried out and the main is expected to be in use to assist pressures in the Coppice Street and Salisbury Road areas during February.

A contract has been placed for the relaying of the defective Gold Hill, St. James Street and Layton Lane main, increasing the diameter from 2" to 4" and so giving increased volume in these areas and eliminating the present health hazards.

At the same time, it is expected that the contract for relaying the main at Barton Hill and Wincombe Lane will be commenced to afford an adequate supply to the new cattle market at Christys Lane and to allow for the opening up of a new housing estate in Wincombe Lane.

Further plans are being prepared to lay a new 3" water main extension from the new St. James Street main to serve a new council housing site at the south of St. James Street as part of the slum clearance programme.

New Connections carried out during the year were as follows:-

(i)	Domestic use	12
(ii)	Agricultural purposes	1
(ii)	Other purposes	1

(d) Domestic Supply. 1,054 houses (having an approximate population of 3,280) are served with the public supply into the house, 42 houses (having an approximate population of 120) are served by outside standpipes only and one house has a satisfactory private supply.

3. DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE.

The disposal systems at Holyrood Farm and Enmore Green continued to function reasonably well, although the Holyrood Farm system has had to have considerable attention. Frequent blockages have occurred due to heavy silt deposits after storms and to the accumulation of bricks still being washed out of the Shooters Lane and tributary sewers. The stormwater overflow drain at the bottom of Shooters Lane has had to be partially relaid and a new catchpit and an inspection chamber constructed to facilitate future cleansing. The St. Johns Hill effluent sewer became blocked through silt and the small diameter of the pipe. The Layton Lane sewer blocked and broke down and it is expected that this sewer will have to be completely relaid in new pitch fibre pipe.

The major scheme mentioned in the 1954 Report is now nearer commencement, in that plans have been prepared and a contract provisionally placed for the reconstruction of the main sewer in Shooters Lane, Angel Lane and Barton Hill to overcome the many nuisances existing in the areas due to the inadequacy of the existing sewer. All this work will be put in hand as soon as the approval of the Ministry of Housing and Local Government is received.

Further extensions of the sewerage will be incorporated in the St. James Street housing scheme, thus adding more effluent to the Holyrood Farm system.

4. PUBLIC CLEANSING.

(a) House Refuse. The Council undertake a weekly kerbside refuse collection on two days each week.

Adequately controlled tipping of refuse at Salisbury Road has continued during the year.

(b) Salvage. The waste paper collection is still carried out by a private firm. A limited amount of extraction of waste metals at the refuse tip has been carried out.

5. RIVERS AND STREAMS POLLUTION.

No material improvement can be expected until a comprehensive new sewage disposal scheme for the Borough has been effected.

6. SHOPS ACT.

The Borough Council is the responsible Authority for the administration of the Shops Act 1950 within the Borough.

No. of inspections carried out	52
No. of defects found	6
No. of notices served	6
No. of notices complied with	5

7. FACTORIES ACT 1937.

	<u>No. of premises on register.</u>	<u>Inspections.</u>	<u>Written Notices.</u>
(i) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 & 6 are to be enforced by Local Authority	3	3	-
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority	17	46	2
(iii) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding out- workers' premises)	9	12	-
Total	29	61	2

	<u>No. of cases in which defects were -</u>		
	<u>Found.</u>	<u>Remedied.</u>	<u>Referred by H.M. Inspector.</u>
Sanitary Conveniences - Unsuitable or defective	2	2	1
Total	2	2	1

No. of outworkers = 45

Following a visit from H.M. Inspector of Factories, a considerable number of discrepancies in the Council's register have been rectified and the register brought up to date. Routine inspection of the factories in the district have not revealed any great change in the existing conditions, but more inspections have been necessary on building sites due to increased works in the area.

8. SMOKE ABATEMENT.

No action was called for or taken during the year.

9. SWIMMING BATHS.

The purification arrangements at the Barton Hill swimming bath have continued to be satisfactory. The demand for use of the bath increased greatly during the summer due to the ideal weather conditions and this accentuated the inadequacy of the dressing room and sanitary facilities. To overcome this, the Council have agreed to work being put in hand to improve these facilities by stages and work has already commenced to have new sanitary accommodation available before the start of the 1956 season. The planning of this work has been so arranged that it is hoped to continue the work in succeeding years in the following rotation, (a) ladies dressing rooms; (b) mens dressing rooms, (c) pumping and filtering.

10. MOVEABLE DWELLINGS AND CAMPING SITES.

No dwellings or sites were licensed during the year although informal action had to be taken in a few cases to prevent the continued use of unauthorized sites. One caravan on Breach Common

was eventually moved after prolonged informal action, chiefly due to the fact that there appears to be no title to the land itself and ownership and responsibility for the site is, therefore, difficult to establish. The Car Park in Coppice Street gives rise to indiscriminate parking of caravans, some of which are used for sleeping purposes, but in no case has the statutory period of forty-two consecutive days been exceeded.

11. VERMINOUS PREMISES.

The only action called for during the year was to deal with two cases of flea infestation where D.D.T. spray and powder were used effectively.

12. PREVENTION OF DAMAGE BY PESTS.

The duties of the Council under the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949 are carried out in the district by the North Dorset Joint Rodent Committee whose activities cover the five districts in North Dorset and the Beaminster Rural District. The Rodent Officer and his operators have done very good work in controlling rat infestation in the area and this is evidenced by the decrease in rat infestation report. Complaints arising during the year have been dealt with promptly and the sewers and refuse tip have been well controlled. The Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries appear to be well satisfied with measures taken in this area and considerable help has been given by the officials of the County Agricultural Executive Committee with regard to farm infestation.

13. RAG FLOCK AND OTHER FILLING MATERIALS ACT 1951.

No premises in the Borough are registered or licensed under this Act.

14. PET ANIMALS ACT 1951.

No premises in the Borough are registered or licensed under this Act.

15. SCHOOLS (INCLUDING SCHOOL CANTEENS).

In conjunction with the County Sanitary Officer inspection of schools and school canteens in the Borough have been carried out.

Improvements have been carried out at various schools in both sanitary conveniences and canteen facilities. As a result of these inspections, the conditions under which meals were served at the Parish Hall for children at the Junior School were improved as far as the existing structure and arrangements will allow. Small improvements were also carried out at the main canteens at the Girls' High School and the Modern School. At the Grammar School reorganisation is taking place.

The biggest improvement in sanitary facilities took place at the Enmore Green Junior School where new W.C.'s and water borne drainage was provided in place of the existing pail closets. New sanitary blocks for both sexes were provided at the Modern School.

16. NATIONAL ASSISTANCE ACTS 1948 & 1951 - Section 47.

No action was called for under these Acts during the year.

17. HOUSING.

Total number of houses in the district 1,097

Inspection of dwelling houses during the year -

Total No. of dwelling houses inspected during the year 1,097
No. of inspections made 1,494

No. of informal notices served 162
No. of informal notices complied with 169
No. of statutory notices served Nil
No. of statutory notices complied with Nil

No. of houses reported under Section 11
of the Housing Act 1936 8

Action taken by the Local Authority in respect
of such houses -

Demolition Orders made Nil

Undertakings accepted for -

(i) Closure 1
(ii) Reconditioning 7
(iii) Other action Nil

No. of houses included in Clearance Areas during the year Nil

Slum Clearance.

The survey of all houses in the district called for by the Ministry of Housing and Local Government is reflected in the number of inspections of houses carried out during the year. All 1,097 houses were subject to a preliminary survey, many of which were inspected to more detail subsequently.

The survey was made the subject of a special report to the Council and the appropriate return made to the Ministry. This return showed that the Council estimates that there are 125 dwellings unfit for human habitation, calling for action under Section 11 of the Housing Act 1936, or slum clearance, and that the Council propose to take action in respect of these 125 houses during the next five years. It is hoped that the bulk of houses ear-marked for clearance will be included in Orders submitted during 1956.

Overcrowding.

Two cases of statutory overcrowding were found during the year and abated.

Houses Let in Lodgings.

No houses in the Borough are known to be let in lodgings.

Housing Repairs and Rents Act 1954.

No applications were received during the year for certificates of disrepair under the above-mentioned Act.

The absence of applications for certificates of disrepair under the above-mentioned Act suggests that owners of property have not sought to take advantage under the Act to increase the rents of houses they have to let.

Improvement Grants (Housing Act 1949 and Housing Repairs and Rents Act 1954).

Nine applications were received during the year for grants under the above-mentioned Act. Eight grants were made and the consideration of one was still pending at the end of the year.

Requisitioned Premises etc.

Two houses were held by the Council under requisition at the end of the year and no houses on which Demolition or Closing Orders had been made, were occupied under licence at the end of the year.

Provision of New Houses and Re-housing.

Twelve new dwellings were provided by the Council during the year and fourteen by private enterprise. Nineteen families were housed by the Council during the year.

The year saw the opening of the new group of twelve dwellings specially built and provided for the use of old people and the Council are to be congratulated on making this special provision.

Unfortunately, no further houses were provided by the Council to meet the requirements of the 136 applicants on the Council's waiting list at the beginning of the year and the erection of no new Council houses was commenced during the year. Consideration was given to the preparation of a scheme for the provision of a limited number of houses in the St. James area, but in view of the Government's present policy with regard to housing subsidies, it may well be that these will be ear-marked for the rehousing of persons displaced by recent slum clearance. If so, those cases still on the Council's waiting list will have to wait a considerable time before there is any chance of their requirements being met.

It is sincerely hoped that the Council will proceed expeditiously to provide those houses at present under consideration and many more in order to meet the urgent demand for additional Council house accommodation.

Private enterprise provided fourteen new dwellings during the year, but these were for owner occupation. There are also possibilities that a new housing site, under private enterprise, may be commenced shortly. This will certainly fill a long needed want, but it is not anticipated that it will materially reduce the demand for council houses.

Housing Applications.

(a) resident within the district	86
(b) resident without the district	37

18. INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD SUPPLIES.

1. Milk.

No change has taken place with regard to milk and dairy premises during the past year and no particular problems arose, all milk sold in the Borough being bottled before reaching the consumer. Samples of milk supplies taken in conjunction with the offers of the County Health Department from producers retailing in the district have given satisfactory results.

Food & Drugs (Milk & Dairies) Act 1944.

No. of 'dealers' subject to registration
by the District Council under regulation 14
of the Milk (Special Designations)(Raw Milk)
Regulations 1949 1

No. of 'dealers' subject to licensing under
regulation 14 of the Milk (Special Designations)
(Pasteurised and Sterilized Milk) Regulations 1949 1

No. of 'dairies' in the district subject to
registration under regulation 8 of the Milk &
Dairies Regulations 1949 Nil

No. of 'distributors' subject to registration under
regulation 8 of the Milk & Dairies Regulations 1949 1

Samples.

No. of samples of milk taken and submitted for examination
during the year:-

	<u>Passed.</u>	<u>Failed.</u>	<u>Total.</u>
Tuberculin Tested	1	-	1
Accredited	-	-	-
Pasteurised	7	1	8
Non-designated	-	-	-

Milk & Dairies Regulations 1949 - Regulation 20.

No action was called for or taken during the year.

2. Other Food Premises.

No. of premises in the district subject to Section 13 of the Food & Drugs Act 1938	<u>53</u>
No. being - restaurant kitchens	<u>5</u>
hotel kitchens	<u>3</u>
food factories	<u>6</u>
No. of such premises inspected	<u>42</u>
No. inspected being - restaurant kitchens	<u>5</u>
hotel kitchens	<u>2</u>
food factories	<u>6</u>
No. of premises in the district subject to registration under Section 14 of the Food & Drugs Act 1938	<u>22</u>
No. of such premises registered in respect of -	
(a) Ice-cream	<u>16</u>
(b) Sausages and prepared meats	<u>6</u>
No. of premises inspected during the year	<u>22</u>
No. of samples of ice-cream taken and submitted for Methylene Blue Test	<u>Nil</u>

There **still** remains room for improvement in certain food premises in the town and there is no doubt that the new Food Hygiene Regulations will give more power for these improvements to be made. This, in turn, will mean more supervision and enforcement and it is obvious that some time must elapse before all premises can be brought up to the requisite standard. In this connection, the public themselves can bring about changes, by co-operation with the Authority in all obvious cases of infringement of the Regulations.

Food Inspection.

Slaughterhouses. There is only one licensed slaughterhouse in the Borough.

1955 was the first full year (since the war) during which slaughtering was carried out at the Littledown Abattoir. The conditions reported upon in the last Annual Health Report still prevail, except that the cooling hall has been rendered and improved

and brought into use. The number of animals killed continues to increase (subject to certain market fluctuations) particularly with regard to calves. The biggest increase occurred in the number of cattle killed and, as these require more time in inspection than other animals, the hours of inspection have increased as a result. Difficulties arise upon inspection due to the hours of slaughter, the bulk of which takes place in the late evening and at week-ends and the insistence of butchers that meat be removed early the following morning.

The quantity of meat condemned from minor and major diseased conditions at the abattoir is as follows:-

Beef	..	2451 lbs.
Beef Offal	..	943 lbs.
Veal	..	750 lbs.
Calf Offal	..	84 lbs.
Mutton	..	52 lbs.
Sheep Offal	..	16 lbs.
Pork	..	4 lbs.
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Total	-	4300 lbs.
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The statistics for meat inspection are detailed in the following table. 203 visits were made, averaging just over half an hour each visit.

Carcases Inspected and Condemned.

	<u>Pigs.</u>	<u>Cattle.</u>	<u>Calves.</u>	<u>Sheep and Lambs.</u>
Number killed	17	121	2233	22
Number inspected	17	121	2233	22
<u>All diseases except Tuberculosis.</u>				
Whole carcase condemned	-	3	18	2
Carcase of which some part or organ was condemned	-	42	5	1
Percentage of the number killed affected with disease other than Tuberculosis	5.88	37.18	1.03	13.64
<u>Tuberculosis only.</u>				
Whole carcase condemned	-	1	-	-
Carcase of which some part or organ was condemned	-	12	-	-
Percentage of the number killed affected with Tuberculosis	-	10.74	-	-

Butchers' Shops and Other Premises.

The result of meat inspection at the abattoir is reflected in the absence of any meat condemned at the butchers' shops and the absence of cases of bone taint, which were the chief reasons for condemnation in the past.

The total quantity of tinned good condemned at grocers' shops compares favourably with previous years, the increase in tinned fruit condemned being offset by the reduction in tinned vegetables.

Tinned Meat	..	72 lbs.
" Fruit	..	178 lbs.
" Vegetables	..	63 lbs.
" Fish	..	31 lbs.
" Milk	..	18 lbs.

Total	-	362 lbs.
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Total of all foodstuffs condemned - 4662 lbs.

Basement Bakehouses.

There is one basement bakehouse in the town which is licensed for use under the Factories Act 1937 in so far as the premises are considered suitable for the purpose for which they are used.

19. SUMMARY OF SANITARY INSPECTIONS (INCLUDING HOUSING) CARRIED OUT.

Total No. of inspections (under all headings)	3,145
Total No. of informal notices served	273
Total No. of informal notices complied with	265
Total No. of statutory notices served	2
Total No. of statutory notices complied with	1
No. of prosecutions	Nil

E. NOTIFIABLE DISEASE.

Other than Tuberculosis -

<u>Disease.</u>	<u>Total Cases Notified.</u>
Whooping Cough	4
Measles	3
Scarlet Fever	1

Tuberculosis -

<u>New Cases Notified.</u>		<u>Deaths.</u>	
<u>Respiratory.</u>	<u>Non.Respiratory.</u>	<u>Respiratory.</u>	<u>Non.Respiratory.</u>
1	-	1	-

Food Poisoning -

There were no cases of suspected food poisoning notified during the year.

NOEL F. PEARSON.

Medical Officer of Health.

